

CITY OF SAINT PAUL
HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION STAFF MEMORANDUM

FILE: HPC Guidelines Discussion – Lighting

DATE OF MEETING: September 9, 2019

STAFF REPORT: George Gause

Chapter 73-Heritage Preservation Commission: Sec. 73.06 ‘Review of Permits’

(c) All decisions of the heritage preservation commission with respect to this section shall be in accordance with the approved program for the preservation of each heritage preservation site.

(e) The heritage preservation commission, upon receipt of the application for permit and plans, shall determine if the work to be performed pursuant to the permit adversely affects the program for the preservation and architectural control of the heritage preservation site or district.

(i) Before approving any permit application required under paragraph (d) of this section to be approved by the heritage preservation commission, the commission shall make findings based on the program for the preservation and architectural control for the heritage preservation site in regard to the following:

(1) In the case of a proposed alteration or addition to an existing building, that such alteration or addition will not materially impair the architectural or historic value of the building and shall make written findings considering the existing structures and existing exterior appearance, building height, building width, depth or other dimensions, roof style, type of building materials, ornamentation, paving and setback.

A. DESCRIPTION:

Currently, each historic district and site have separate guidelines (*Preservation Program for the Preservation and Architectural Control*). These guidelines have inconsistencies and omissions. During the Chapter 73 update meeting in May 2018 and in the listening sessions this fall the guidelines were stated as a concern. We received comments such as:

- Guidelines are not clear with unrealistic expectations which hurt residents.*
- More flexibility on window replacement-consider energy efficiency.*
- Consider modern materials and building options, including energy efficiency.*
- More dynamic and creative new construction.*
- Work that cannot be seen should be allowed.*
- Take into consideration costs.*

B. PURPOSE:

This is the initial discussions of a much larger process which will include outreach to residents, architects, contractors, elected officials and others, formation of a steering committee with different representatives from different user groups and a series of public meeting to discuss what will come forward for a vote.

This year we will set aside time to discuss topic areas in the guidelines each month.

Commissioners should focus their deliberations on three areas:

1. Providing simple clear language
2. What changes should we consider
3. Issues with past applications

C. OUTCOME GOAL:

The long-term goal for this process is to establish a new Legislative Code Chapter 74 that addresses issues that have been brought up by residents of the heritage districts:

- Equitable for all residents
- Sustainability opportunities
- Easy to understand
- Simple to use

D. SEPTEMBER TOPIC- Lighting

In the existing guidelines, lighting is divided in three areas; parking/street, porch/house and signage.

Questions:

- Should lighting be its own section in the guidelines?
- Should street lighting have guidelines?
- Should intensity or color of light be included?

Dayton’s Bluff

Public improvements. New street and landscape improvements, lighting, street furniture and signs should be compatible with the character of the historic district. The historic urban pattern of gridplan streets should be retained and enhanced in improvement projects.

Signs and lighting. Signs, graphics and lighting should be designed as part of the facade. Signs on commercial blocks housing several adjacent businesses should be designed to unify the facade, while providing identity for individual businesses. Type style, sign color and sign materials should complement the building exterior. Lighting should be compatible with the building exterior and signs. Internally lighted signs should not be used where they overpower the facade or setting.

Hill

Parking spaces should not be located in front yards. Residential parking spaces should be located in rear yards. Parking lots for commercial uses should be to the side or rear of commercial structures and have a minimum number of curb cuts. All parking spaces should be adequately screened from the street and sidewalk by landscaping. The scale of parking lots should be minimized and the visual sweep of pavement should be broken up by use of planted areas. The scale, level of light output and design of parking lot lighting should be compatible with the character of the district.

Jacob Schmidt

Signs, graphics and lighting should be designed as part of the facade.

Illumination. Signs should generally be lit from on the site. There should be no flashing, blinking, moving, or varying intensity lighting. Subdued lighting is preferred. Backlit fluorescent or exposed neon are generally inappropriate.

Lighting. The location and style of exterior lights should be appropriate to the structure's age and original design intent.

Limestone Properties

Signs, graphics and lighting should be designed as part of the facade.

If illumination is necessary, signs should be lit from on the site (not internal illumination). Because they are historically inappropriate, there should be no flashing, blinking, moving, or varying intensity lighting. Subdued lighting is preferred. Backlit fluorescent or exposed neon are generally inappropriate.

Lighting. The location and style of exterior lights should be appropriate to the structure's age and original design intent.

Lowertown

Lighting. Location of exterior lights should be appropriate to the structure. Signs should generally be lit from on the site. There should be no flashing, blinking, moving, or varying intensity lighting. Subdued lighting is preferred. Backlit fluorescent or exposed neon are generally inappropriate.

Summit Avenue West

The scale, level of light output, and design of parking lot lighting should be compatible with the sixteen-foot-high, lantern-style lights along Summit Avenue.

University-Raymond

Lighting. Location of exterior lights should be appropriate to the structure. Signs should generally be lit from on the site. There should be no flashing, blinking, moving, or varying intensity lighting. Subdued lighting is preferred. Backlit fluorescent or exposed neon are generally inappropriate.